Readiness Through Hearing Conservation

A Commander's Guide

BOOM!!

Outline

- Hearing and combat readiness
- Your hearing conservation program
- Hearing Profiles
- Summary
- Questions
- Conclusion

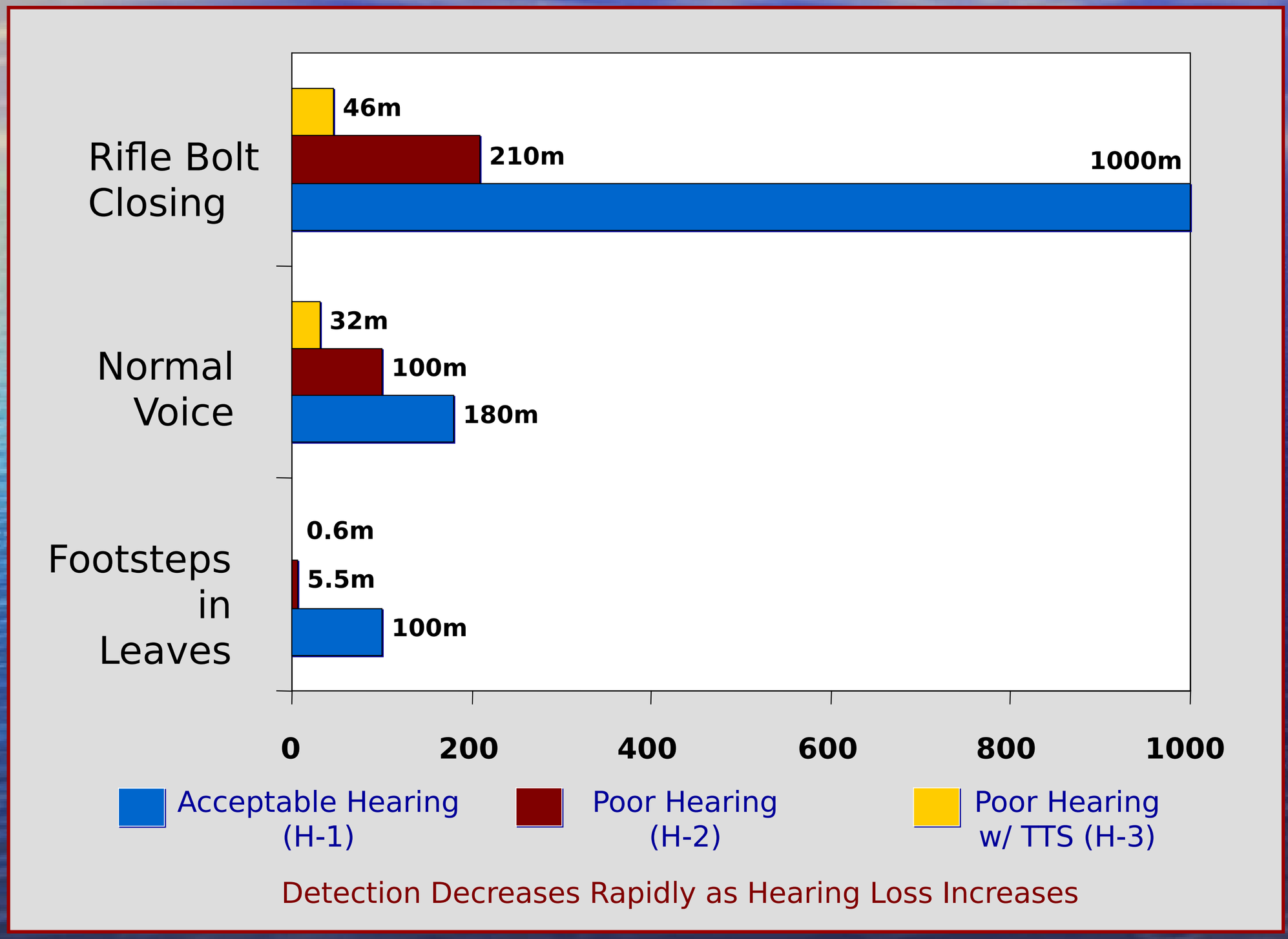
COMBAT READINESS

"Shortly after moonrise, Howe was startled by loud voices... over where Stebbins and Heard had been hit. He popped an earplug and listened harder. The voices were speaking Somali. They must have been half deaf like everyone else from all the explosions, and didn't realize how loud they were talking. Sometimes it took soldiers two or three days to regain full hearing after a fight."

Battle of the Black Sea
Mogadishu, Somalia

Delta Force, SFC Paul Howe

DETECTION OF SOUND BY HEARING ABILITY



The Hearing Conservation Program
It's the Commander's Program

- AR 40-5 Preventive Medicine
- DA PAM 40-501 Hearing Conservation
- Insert USAEUR's Policy
- Part of Command Inspection Program

HC Program Elements

- Noise hazard identification
- Engineering controls
- Hearing protectors
- Health Education
- Monitoring Audiometry
- Enforcement
- Program evaluation

What is required of you?

- IMPLEMENT A UNIT LEVEL PROGRAM
  - Assign a unit level hearing conservation officer/NCO
  - Command emphasis letter (sample provided)
  - SOP (sample provided)
- ENFORCE THE PROGRAM
  - Soldiers use hearing protection in noise
  - Noise-hazardous areas and equipment identified
  - Soldier’s report for annual education
  - Soldier’s report for annual hearing testing

Annual Hearing Testing / Training

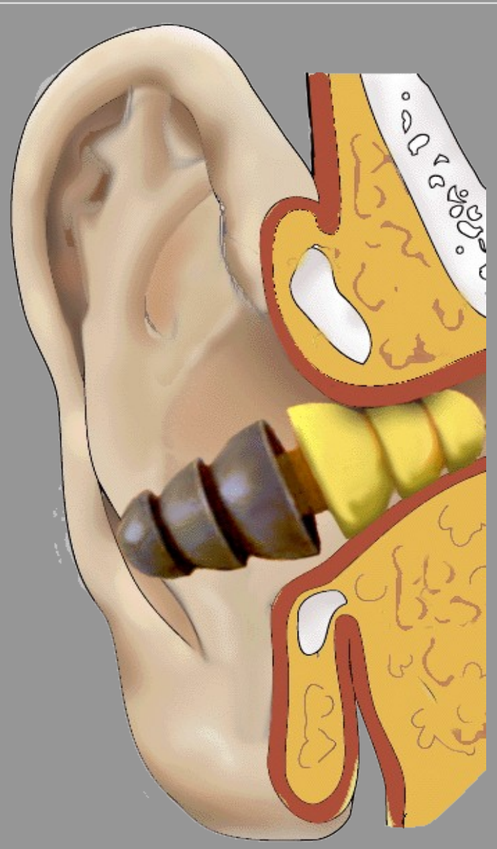
- Annual testing
  - A deployment requirement
  - Available at all military treatment facilities
  - Hours (consult local facility for hours)
- Annual training
  - Can be completed by unit training NCO
  - Videos/presentations available for check-out
  - Document training
  - Must cover all areas outlined in DA-PAM 40-501

Annual Hearing Testing / Training (Cont.)

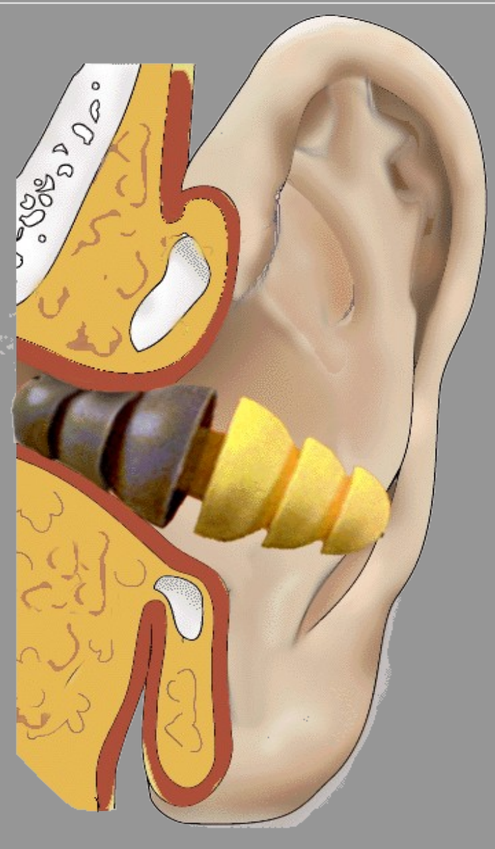
- Standard Threshold Shift (STS)
  - A significant change in hearing from baseline
  - Commander must be notified of all STS
  - What caused this? (Lack of Education? New Noise Hazard? Non-compliance with program?)
- OSHA Reportable STS
  - A significant change in hearing resulting in material hearing impairment.
  - CA-1, CA-2, DA-285 must be completed by Commander
  - Notify Command Safety
  - Name of soldier goes on OSHA 300 Log

Hearing Profiles

- Issued by Audiologist or Physician
- H1 = Good to go
- H2 = Some hearing loss (one ear may be deaf). Know your soldiers and don't put them in positions which may compromise the mission or safety of the troops.
- H3 = Significant hearing loss that may affect communication ability. NON-DEPLOYABLE without MMRB/MEB.
- H4 = Significant hearing loss and significant communication deficit even with amplification. NON-DEPLOYABLE without MMRB/MEB



COMBAT ARMS EARPLUG



- Insert YELLOW plugs for weapons fire in dismounted mode.
- Insert OLIVE DRAB plugs for steady state noise in and around aircraft, noisy vehicles and watercraft, etc.
- Keep filter holes free of earwax and other debris.
- Check proper insertion for slight tension by gently tugging on plugs.
- Ensure that plugs are cleaned with soap and water and dry

USACHPPM
Readiness thru Health

SUMMARY

- Hearing and combat readiness
- Your hearing conservation program
- Hearing Profiles

QUESTIONS???????

Conclusion

"If I could change one thing from the past 20 years, it would be the constant ringing in my ears I live with now - all because I didn't wear hearing protection when I should have... The only thing I can change now are the batteries in my hearing aids."

After 20 Years of Service...Only One Regret
SGM Kevin M. Skelly
NCO Journal, Fall 95

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